

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 10029

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, PO

SUBJECT: SOVIETS PUBLICLY SUPPORT PORTUGAL'S AFM

1. SUMMARY. WITH SIGNED COMMENTARIES IN IZVESTIYA (KAMYNIN, JULY 15) AND PRAVDA (YAKHONTOV, JULY 16) THE SVOIETS JUMP FOUR
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SQUARE INTO THE CURRENT PORTUGUESE FRAY. BOTH COMMENTS PUT

MOSCOW FULLY ON THE SIDE OF THE AFM AND PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS. THE SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP IS VEHEMENTLY ATTACKED FOR ACTING IN "UNION" WITH THE FORCES OF REACTION AND IMPERIALISM AND FOR OPPOSING "THE WILL OF THE MASSES," CHARGES TANTAMOUNT TO DECLARING SOARES AND COMPANY CLASS ENEMIES. IZVESTIYA, IN AN APPARENT EFFORT TO COUNTER THOSE WHO WARN THAT THE AFM'S POLICIES WILL LEAD TO PORTUGAL'S ISOLATION, OPENLY PROMISES "SOCIALIST" SUPPORT FOR THE "NEW" PORTUGAL. END SUMMARY.

2. IZVESTIYA'S KAMYNIN PULLS OUT THE DIALECTIC STOPS IN CASTIGATING SOARES AND COMPANY. LARGELY PARROTING THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST LINE, WITH SOME REFERENCES WORTHY OF THE BEST STALINIST RHETORIC ABOUT CLASS ENEMIES, KAMYNIN CHARGES THE PORTUGUESE SOCIALISTS HAVE PRECIPITATED THE CURRENT CRISIS BECAUSE THE COURSE OF RECENT EVENTS--I.E., THE AFM'S ANNOUNCED PLAN TO ORGANIZE MASS POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS--DOES NOT SUIT THE SOCIALIST LEADERS.

3. KAMYNIN SAYS THE REASON FOR THE SOCIALISTS' ACTION IS AN "OVER-ESTIMATION" OF THE SUCCESS OF SOCIALIST CANDIDATES IN THE ELECTIONS TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. THIS HAS LED THE SOCIALISTS TO "SLIDE DOWN" TO THE POSITIONS OF THE REACTIONARY FORCES, TO "ACT IN UNISON" WITH THE ENEMIES OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE, AND TO PLAY INTO THE REACTIONARIES' HANDS. MOREOVER, HE ASSERTS, THE SOCIALISTS' PRESENT POSITION IS OPENING A WIDER FIELD FOR COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY MANEUVERS. HOWEVER, KAMYNIN CONCLUDES, ALTHOUGH PORTUGAL'S PATH HAS MANY DIFFICULTIES, "DEEPENED BY THE PRESSURE OF FOREIGN IMPERIALIST FORCES," THESE FORCES HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED IN ISOLATING THE LISBON REGIME, AND THE "NEW PORTUGAL" CAN COUNT ON ACTIVE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL COOPERATION WITH THE "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES.

4. IN SIMILAR VEIN, PRAVDA'S YAKHONTOV CLAIMS THAT MASS DEMONSTRATIONS OF SUPPORT FOR THE AFM'S PROGRAM CLEARLY SHOW THAT ATTEMPTS BY "BOURGEOIS-RIGHTIST" CIRCLES AND THE SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP TO UNDERMINE THE UNITY OF THE AFM AND THE PEOPLE ARE DOOMED. THE SOCIALISTS PARTY'S STATEMENT ON WITHDRAWAL OF ITS MINISTERS FROM THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAYS, CONFLICTED

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WITH "THE WILL OF THE MASSES" AND THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL RESPONDED BY ANNOUNCING THAT THE MINISTERS HAD "RESIGNED." IN THIS ACTION, YAKHONTOV CLAIMS, "DEMOCRATIC CIRCLES" HAVE ENDED THE SOCIALISTS' MOVE AND THE "PROGRESSIVE" FORCES BELIEVE THE SOCIALISTS HAVE TAKEN ON A "HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY" FOR INCREASING THE DIFFICULTIES FACING THE COUNTRY.

5. COMMENT: THE SOCIALISTS' WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PORTUGUESE

GOVERNMENT AND THE RAPID EMERGENCE OF AN OPEN CONFLICT BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST-BACKED AFM AND THE MODERATE SOCIAL DEMOCRATES, HAS FINALLY BROUGHT MOSCOW OFF THE FENCE ON THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION. THAT THIS WAS NOT A DECISION TAKEN LIGHTLY IS INDICATED BY THE FACT THAT IT TOOK MOSCOW MORE THAN A WEEK TO MAKE UP ITS MIND. ALTHOUGH PREVIOUS SOVIET TREATMENT OF PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS INDICATED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BACK THE MILITARY TO SOME DEGREE, THE PRESENT PUBLIC ATTACK ON SOARES AND HIS COLLEAGUES DEPARTS ABRUPTLY FROM MOSCOW'S EARLIER CAUTION IN HANDLING THE MOST RECENT PORTUGUESE CRISIS. IN ADDITION TO THE SOVIETS' APPARENT DESIRE TO INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME OF EVENTS IN LISBON, WE SUSPECT THAT THE SOVIETS' DECISION TO SPEAK OUT NOW PROBABLY REFLECTS THE BELIEF HERE THAT THE HOUR OF DECISION IN LISBON IS NOT FAR OFF. IT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT MOSCOW GIVES THE CURRENT COMMUNIST-BACKED AFM REGIME A BETTER THAN EVEN CHANCE OF WEATHERING WHATEVER CHALLENGE THE SOCIALISTS CAN MUSTER.

6. BEYOND THESE CONSIDERATIONS IT STRIKES US AS LIKELY THAT MOSCOW HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO GROWING PRESSURE TO MOVE IN SUPPORT OF PORTUGAL'S COMMUNISTS, BOTH BY THE PCP ITSELF AND BY OTHER FORCES WITHIN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT. IN THIS CONNECTION IZVESTIYA'S OVERT ASSURANCE THAT PORTUGAL CAN COUNT ON "SOCIALIST SUPPORT," FOR EXAMPLE, SEMS AIMED AT BOLSTERING THE COMMUNISTS' CASE AGAINST ARGUMENTS THAT PORTUGAL'S FURTHER DRIFT TOWARD "PEOPLES DEMOCRACY" WILL BRING LISBON'S ISOLATION IN EUROPE. AT THE SAME TIME THE PROMISE OF "ACTIVE" COOPERATION IS PROBABLY SEEN HERE AS NEEDED COVER FOR SOVIET FLANKS WITHIN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN THE EVENT THINGS GO BADLY FOR THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNISTS. STOESEL

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